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INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	AID-00	ARA-01	A-00	CA-02
	CCO-00	CG-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-01	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
	UTED-00	IMMC-01	IM-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	JUSE-00
	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	MMP-00	M-00	DCP-01	NRCE-00
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	SNIS-00
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P 201524Z NOV 98
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4177
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 006107

DEPARTMENT FOR S/CT - REAP

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PTER, AR
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: 1998 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 202128

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THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO PARAGRAPH 3 IN
REFTEL.

A. THERE HAVE BEEN NO ACTS OF TERRORISM IN ARGENTINA IN 1998. HOWEVER, A MEMBER OF A PSEUDO-REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION KNOWN AS THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION (ORP) WAS ARRESTED FOR A VARIETY OF COMMON CRIMES (SEE BUENOS AIRES 5546). ALSO TWO REPUTED MEMBERS OF PERU'S SENDERO LUMINOSO WERE ARRESTED NEAR BUENOS AIRES IN AUGUST (SEE BUENOS AIRES 4175).

B. IN AUGUST, THE ARGENTINE SUPREME COURT REFUSED THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT'S EXTRADITION REQUEST FOR SUSPECTED RIGHT-WING TERRORIST AUGUSTO CAUCHI, ACCUSED OF BEING INVOLVED IN THE 1980 BOMBING OF THE BOLOGNA RAILWAY

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STATION IN WHICH MORE THAN 80 PEOPLE DIED (SEE BUENOS AIRES 4174). THE COURT RULED THAT AS CAUCHI HAD ALREADY BEEN TRIED AND FOUND GUILTY IN ABSENTIA, HE COULD NOT BE EXTRADITED. THE COURT ALSO NOTED THAT CAUCHI WAS WANTED ON CHARGES OF ILLICIT ASSOCIATION AND POSSESSION OF FIRE ARMS AND EXPLOSIVES, CHARGES WHICH DID NOT MEET THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY FOR EXTRADITION.

GOA OFFICIALS TELL US THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF PERU HAS NOT YET REQUESTED THE EXTRADITION OF THE TWO SENDERO LUMINOSO SUSPECTS ARRESTED IN AUGUST (ABOVE).

C. DISCUSSION CONTINUES IN ARGENTINA ABOUT POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM TO ALLOW THE USE OF PAID INFORMANTS, PLEA BARGAINING, AND UNDERCOVER AGENTS. MOST LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS AND MANY PROMINENT JUDGES,
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INCLUDING JUAN GALEANO, THE PRESIDING JUDGE IN THE AMIA CASE, FAVOR SUCH CHANGES. HOWEVER, PAST ABUSES OF POLICE POWER DURING THE MILITARY REGIMES CONTINUE TO COLOR THE IMPRESSIONS OF MUCH OF THE POPULATION. IT REMAINS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHEN, IF EVER, SUCH CHANGES WILL OCCUR, ALTHOUGH WE DOUBT MUCH MOVEMENT WILL HAPPEN DURING 1999, A YEAR OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

D. THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT STRONGLY DEPLORES TERRORIST ATTACKS WHEREVER THEY HAPPEN. PRESIDENT MENEM AND OTHER SENIOR ARGENTINE OFFICIALS CONDEMNED THE BOMBINGS OF THE U.S. EMBASSIES IN NAIROBI AND DAR ES SALAAM, AS WELL AS VOICED UNDERSTANDING FOR THE U.S. STRIKES ON BIN LADEN'S BASE IN AFGHANISTAN AND IN SUDAN.

E. THE GOA, PRIMARILY INTERIOR MINISTER CARLOS CORACH, CONTINUES TO WORK HARD WITH ITS BRAZILIAN AND PARAGUAYAN NEIGHBORS IN STRENGTHENING SECURITY IN THE TRI-BORDER REGION. UNDER ARGENTINE LEADERSHIP, THE THREE COUNTRIES SIGNED IN MARCH THE SECURITY PLAN FOR THE TRI-BORDER AREA (SEE BUENOS AIRES 1615). CORACH HAS PUSHED ALL THE NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES UNDER HIS COMMAND TO COMPLY WITH THE OBLIGATIONS STEMMING FROM THIS AGREEMENT.

THE GOA CONTINUES TO BE VERY ACTIVE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. THE GOA WILL HOST THE SECOND SPECIALIZED INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON TERRORISM NOVEMBER 22-23 IN MAR DEL PLATA. THE GOA HAS ACTIVELY SOUGHT TO IMPROVE REGIONAL COOPERATION AND HOPES THE CONFERENCE WILL BRING INTO BEING SOME PRODUCTIVE STEPS IT HAS PROPOSED SUCH AS

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THE CREATION OF A PERMANENT OAS COUNTER-TERRORISM BODY.
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F. THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA DOES NOT SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS.

G. THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA HAS NOT MADE ANY STATEMENTS SUPPORTING A TERRORIST SUPPORTING COUNTRY. IN FACT, EARLIER THIS YEAR THE GOA REDUCED ITS DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN TEHRAN TO ONE OFFICIAL AND ASKED THE GOI TO DO THE SAME IN BUENOS AIRES AFTER ALLEGATIONS EMERGED THAT AT LEAST ONE FORMER OFFICIAL OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY IN BUENOS AIRES HAD PLAYED A ROLE IN THE AMIA BOMBING (SEE BUENOS AIRES 2527).

H. THE TWO MAJOR TERRORIST ATTACKS IN ARGENTINA, THE 1992 BOMBING OF THE ISRAELI EMBASSY AND THE 1994 BOMBING OF THE AMIA JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER, REMAIN UNSOLVED WITH THE INVESTIGATIONS CONTINUING. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN SOME PROGRESS IN BOTH CASES. THE SUPREME COURT'S SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR HAS BEEN PURSUING LEADS IN AN EFFORT TO BUILD A SOLID CASE SUPPORTING ISLAMIC JIHAD'S CLAIM OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK. THE JUDGE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE AMIA INVESTIGATION HAS CONTINUED HIS EFFORTS ON BOTH THE INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC FRONTS. HE INTERVIEWED IRANIAN DEFECTORS IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF PLANNING FOR THE BOMBING. HE ALSO MOVED AHEAD WITH CHARGES AGAINST FORMER ARGENTINE

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POLICE OFFICIALS IMPLICATED IN THE CRIME. HIS
INVESTIGATION FOUND THAT ONE OF THESE OFFICIALS RECEIVED
APPROXIMATELY USD 2 MILLION A FEW WEEKS BEFORE THE
ATTACK. WHILE THE OFFICIAL CLAIMED THE SUM CAME FROM HIS
FATHER, A RETIRED RAILROAD WORKER, MOST BELIEVE THE TRUTH
LIES ELSEWHERE. ANOTHER ARGENTINE IMPLICATED IN THE
ATTACK WAS CHARGED IN OCTOBER FOR HIS PARTICIPATION IN
PROVIDING THE STOLEN VAN USED IN THE BOMBING (SEE BUENOS
AIRES 5826). WE NOTE THAT A POSSIBLE KEY INFORMANT HAS
BEEN DETAINED IN BRAZIL AT THE REQUEST OF THE GOA. HE
MAY PROVIDE THE JUDGE WITH IMPORTANT INFORMATION. WE
WILL REPORT ANY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS.

I. A LARGE (20-MEMBER) TEAM OF FBI EXPERTS SPENT ONE
MONTH IN BUENOS AIRES THIS YEAR REVIEWING THE
INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE AMIA BOMBING AND THE ISRAELI
EMBASSY ATTACK. THE TEAM'S REVIEW WAS WELCOMED BY THE
GOA AND FULL COOPERATION WAS RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THE
VISIT. WHILE NOT PROVIDING ANY STARTLING INSIGHTS, THE
REVIEW DID LEAD TO SOME NEW AVENUES FOR INVESTIGATION
WHICH THE GOA IS PURSUING.

ARGENTINA HAS BEEN THE RECIPIENT OF OVER USD 4 MILLION IN
ANTI-TERRORISM TRAINING.

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